THE

Great Danger and Miſtake

Of all New Uninſpir'd

PROPHECIES,

Relating to the

End of the World.

BEING

A *Sermon* Preach'd on *Nov.* 23d, 1707.

AT

Serjeants-Inn-Chappel, in *Chancery-Lane.*

With an Appendix of Hiſtorical Collections, applicable to all ſuch Prophecies as are condemned in this Diſcourſe, and to *Thoſe* which are now venting in the World.

By *EDM. CHISHULL*, B. D. late Chaplain at *Smyrna*, and Fellow of *C. C. C. Oxon.*

——— *Quid æternis minorem*
Conſiliis animum fatigas? Hor.

LONDON:
Printed for *S. Manſhip*, at the *Ship* over againſt the *Royal-Exchange* in *Cornhill.* 1708.

The Reader *is requested to correct two Lines of* pag. 35. *where, by mistake, is Printed* 1702, *and* 1701, *for* 1672, *and* 1671.

PREFACE.

THE *enſuing Diſcourſe is humbly offer'd as an Eſſay toward ſome more elaborate and extenſive Work, which may be requiſite againſt a growing Notion of this Age; as if the* Conſummation *were at hand. In the mean time, while we are now alarm'd by a ſordid Impoſture of this kind, ſuch as needs not to be refuted, but expos'd; our Church may poſſibly accept of this weak Endeavour, for the ſtopping any Inſult She may expect from that of* Rome. *For whether or no* Thoſe *are indeed the Enemies that have ſown theſe Tares amongſt us; They undoubtedly will rejoyce at their ſpringing up: And are now ready to reproach Two Proteſtant Churches at the ſame time: the One as furniſhing the Actors, and the Other as having ſupply'd the Scene, to ſo deep a Tragedy in Religion.*

But the Materials of that Appendix *I ſhall here adjoyn, will lay likewiſe a large ſhare of the ſame Infirmities to the charge of the Church of* Rome; *and, at the ſame time, they will abundantly convince the Reader of the Uſefulneſs, and Expe-*

diency of this Diſcourſe. Had theſe been well conſidered, as I am ſure they were fully known, when this Sermon was once delivered before another Learned Auditory; its Author had not been then traduced, as if he had undutifully directed it againſt a Right Reverend Father of our Church. But why was it not ſaid, ſome Father of the Church of Greece; *where the Sermon was at firſt Compos'd, and Preach'd to the Factory at* Smyrna? *'Tis entrenching, methinks, on the deference that is due to ſo great a Name, to bring it, on this occaſion, upon the Stage. Yet ſince the freedom of other Men has made this Rudeneſs neceſſary, I will add what follows, for the removing of ſo injurious a Reflection. Being then almoſt a Stranger to my Native Country, I was not indeed acquainted with what that moſt Learned Prelate is preparing on ſome Scripture Prophecies. But ſince ſome Perſons have taken this occaſion to inform me of it; I crave leave to tell them, that I conceive as greatly of that performance, as 'tis poſſible to do of one that has not yet appear'd. I expect to ſee it manag'd with an equal Modeſty and Judgment, but with a ſuperior knowledge of Scripture and Antiquity, to the incomparable Labour of Mr.* Mede. *And having ſaid thus much, I hope it will ſufficiently acquit the intention of my Diſcourſe: ſince it has nothing indeed to boaſt of, but what it has borrowed from that Work.*

THE

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JAMES 5. 8.

The Coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

I Know not by what Infirmity of ſome Men it happens, that they are fond of preſaging the final Diſſolution of the *Univerſe*. Whether this may proceed from a Natural habit of Melancholy, or an Affected ſhew of Piety, or an Ambition of being the firſt Foretellers of that Great Event; moſt certain it is, that ſome have taken upon them to fix the Time of Chriſt's Appearance, and to Summon all Mankind to the Judgment of the

Great Day. Nor have theſe Opinions always reſted amongſt the Brainſick and Enthuſiaſtick Multitude; but have ſometimes prevail'd ſo far, as to poſſeſs even thoſe of Note and Character in the Church: More particularly, in the * Third, the Eleventh, the Twelfth, and the late expir'd Century. It were needleſs to paſs any laborious Cenſure on theſe Men or their Opinions; on which every one that now hears me, muſt naturally make theſe Three Reflections. *Firſt*, That they are inſufferably Arrogant in pretending to determine that time which, as the Scripture aſſures us, is Unſearchable to Man, or Angel, or even to Chriſt himſelf in His Human Nature. *Secondly*, That they juſtly become the Scorn and the Reproach of Mankind, whilſt they themſelves have the Misfortune to outlive their vain Predictions. *Thirdly*, That though they have falſely foretold Chriſt's Coming, yet He has moſt truly foretold theirs, and at the ſame time caution'd his true Diſciples againſt adhering to them. *Many ſhall come in my name, ſaying, I am Chriſt, and the time draweth near; go ye not therefore after them.* (Luke 21. 8.)

But after all, there will ariſe this Queſtion, of ſome Weight and Difficulty; *viz.* What then is the meaning of thoſe Scriptures which ſpeak of the End, and *Chriſt's* Second Coming as near at hand? How ſhall we Interpret thoſe Holy Pen-Men, who in that firſt Infancy of Chriſtianity, ſeem'd apprehenſive that they then liv'd upon the laſt Scene of this lower World? That *the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh*, is the expreſs Aſſertion of my Text. An-

* See the particulars of this in the Appendix.

ſwerable

ſwerable to this, St. *Paul* likewiſe aſſures the *Philippians*, that *the Lord is at hand.* (*Phil.* 4. 5.) *The end of all things is at hand*, ſays St. *Peter.* (1 *Pet.* 4. 7.) *I come quickly, ſurely I come quickly*, ſays our Lord, himſelf. (*Rev.* 22. 12, 20.) agreeably to which we read in the Goſpel of St. *John: The Hour is coming, and now is, when the Dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God.* (John 5. 25.) To ſay nothing of thoſe other Places of Holy Scripture, in which the *laſt Time*, the *latter Days*, and *the ends of the World*, are Phraſes put to ſignifie the Firſt Ages of the Goſpel. Theſe are thoſe plain Expreſſions which at firſt View ſeem to repreſent the Frame, as juſt Diſſolving, and God Deſcending down from Heaven, to change the Natural, as well as Moral World: Tho' nevertheleſs, both have now continued ſince that time, for more than Sixteen Centuries. Hence the great * Cardinal *Baronius*, with other unwary Writers of the Church of *Rome*, have not ſtuck to ſay that the Apoſtles were miſtaken in this Point; it being that peculiar Matter of which Chriſt had no Authority to inform them. But 'tis one thing to be uninform'd of the Day of Judgment, and another to aſſign a falſe time of that Event. And therefore the Ignorance of the Apoſtles in the former of theſe Two Caſes, could hardly excuſe any Slip they may have committed in the latter. To clear therefore this Queſtion, by which ſome Men have been drove upon untimely Prophecies, and others have raſhly imputed an Error to the Inſpir'd Pen-Men; I ſhall divide the following Diſcourſe into theſe Two General Heads.

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* See *Baron.* Tom. 1. p. 656. Edit. Rom. Spondan. Epit. An. 57. §. 54. To which, add the late Dr. *Mills* in his *Prolegomena* to the *New Teſt.* Pag. 146. col. 2.

I. *I ſhall account for thoſe Paſſages of Holy Writ, which ſpeak of the End, and Chriſt's Second Coming as near at hand.*

II. *I ſhall conſider how far all bold Enquirers into the time of the laſt Judgment, tend not only to diſturb the good Order of the World, but likewiſe to fruſtrate the moſt Subſtantial and moſt Noble Duties of our Religion.*

I. Therefore, I am to account for thoſe Paſſages of Holy Writ, which ſpeak of the End, and Chriſt's Second Coming as near at hand: And this, as I conceive, will beſt be done, by ſhewing,

Firſt, That theſe Paſſages of Holy Writ could not reaſonably be Interpreted, even in the Apoſtles times, concerning any ſudden Diſſolution of the World. And

Secondly, By enquiring what is that true and genuine Meaning, which now, and then, and always will agree to them. ——Therefore

Firſt, I am to ſhew that my Text, and the like Paſſages of Holy Writ, could not reaſonably be Interpreted even in the Apoſtles times, concerning any ſudden Diſſolution of the World. ——As the Mind of any Author is beſt explain'd by himſelf, when in another place he is Diſcourſing on the ſame Subject; ſo muſt this Rule more particularly be obſerv'd in the Interpretation of Holy Scripture: which having been firſt Wrote under the direction of the Holy Spirit, cannot eaſily be Submitted to any bare Human and Earthly Judge. If therefore in the Books of the New Teſtament, there ſhall Occur any plain Expreſſions which either directly aſſert, or elſe neceſſarily infer, that the Diſſolution of the World ſhall not be very ſudden; then the Paſſages before recited,

recited, muſt admit of ſome other than what at firſt ſight appears to be their meaning. And ſo the continuance of the World, from that to theſe preſent times, ſhall leave no Suſpicion, either of Miſtake, or Deceit, on the Holy and Inſpir'd Pen-Men. ——Therefore

1. When in the 21*ſt Chapter* of St. *Luke*, our Saviour is diſcourſing concerning the time of the Great Day, He there ſeems to obviate that Opinion, into which ſome of his Diſciples might poſſibly have been led, *viz.* of the General Conflagration being near at hand. He there tells them, that it ſhall at length be preceded by ſome Terrible Commotions and Convulſions in the World: but then at the ſame time, He Cautions them not to miſtake all Changes either of State or Nature, for Signs of that Great Event. For ſays He expreſly, *The End is not by and by*: *i. e.* ſome conſiderable Succeſſion of Years ſhall follow, before the Goſpel is to be Concluded; and God and Man are to meet in order to their Great Account. To this poſitive Teſtimony of our Saviour, we may add that other of his Apoſtle St. *Paul*: who finding that the *Theſſalonians* had falſely Infer'd from ſome words of his, that the World ſhould be ſuddenly at an End, corrects therefore their Miſtake, in this Plain and Pathetic Exhortation: *Now we beſeech you Brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and by our gathering together unto him, that you be not ſoon ſhaken in Mind, or be troubled, neither by Spirit, nor by Word, nor by Letter as from us, as that the Day of Chriſt is at hand. Let no Man deceive you: for that Day ſhall not come, except there be a falling away firſt, and that Man of Sin be Revealed, the Son of Perdition.* (2 Theſſ. 2. 1, *&c.*) from which latter words of St. *Paul*, we likewiſe are afforded another evident reaſon, why the foremention'd

tion'd Paſſages are to be Interpreted of no ſudden Diſſolution of the Univerſe. ——For,

2. We are plainly here Inform'd, that the Day of Chriſt ſhall not as yet come, till ſome great Apoſtate ſhall ariſe, and ſhall draw the Eyes of the World upon him. Him he here deſcribes as the *Man of Sin, and the Son of Perdition ; who oppoſeth, and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God, or is Worſhipped ; ſo that He, as God, ſitteth in the Temple of God, ſhewing Himſelf that He is God.* Which Character, whether it will beſt agree to the *Turk*, who boaſts himſelf as God in the Seat of the Chriſtian Emperours, or to the *Pope*, who acts another ſort of God in the Seat of Chriſt Himſelf, let others determine. I ſhall only at preſent make uſe of this Paſſage, to infer, that the Authors of the New Teſtament, did neither themſelves Believe, nor Teach others to expect any ſudden Diſſolution of the World. For whatever was that Monſter here intended by the Apoſtle, it needed ſome conſiderable time to raiſe him to that pitch of Antichriſtian Power ; and poſſibly much more till He ſhould be remov'd again, and conſum'd, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, with the Spirit of the Lord. But then after all, what diſtance of time ſhould run betwixt this defeat of Antichriſt, and the Coming of our Saviour, as is the Scripture it ſelf, ſo ought we likewiſe to be profoundly ſilent. —But,

3. It is our Saviours own poſitive and expreſs Prophecy, that every part of the World ſhall at leaſt Succeſſively, and at ſome time or other become Chriſtian, before the Day of His Second Coming. *This Goſpel of the Kingdom ſhall be Preached in the World, for a witneſs to all Nations, and then ſhall the End come.* (Mat. 24. 14.) Here therefore the Firſt Chriſtians are adviſed of a vaſt and extenſive Work, a Work

of

of long time and prodigious Difficulty: Till the Accompliſhment of which, both the Natural and Moral World, were to remain intire. True indeed it is, that God could ſoon have call'd every Nation under Heaven, to the Obedience of the Goſpel. But on the other ſide, thoſe weak and human Methods by which he Viſibly effected this, gave them an Immeaſurable ſpace of time to expect the Concluſion of the World. We ſtill ſee after the Tract of almoſt Seventeen Hundred Years, how great a part of this Promiſe remains yet to be Accompliſh'd: Religion having Travell'd by ſlow Paces from the *Eaſt*, and from the Brink of the *Weſtern* Continent, but lately ſtept over into the *American* World. Tho' therefore we are far from enquiring, and much farther from determining when the End of the World ſhall be, yet we even now conceive it as approaching at a diſtance. For as St. *Paul* could ſay in the former, ſo can we likewiſe ſay in theſe latter Ages of Chriſtianity, (*Heb.* 2. 8.) *We ſee not yet all things put under him.* And then the Inference is juſt, that the Diſſolution of the World is not ſo ſuddenly to be expected. Becauſe according to the ſame Apoſtle, *Then cometh the End, when He ſhall have put down all Rule, and all Authority and Power: i. e.* when by the general Reception of the Goſpel, the Deſtruction of Antichriſt, and the Converſion of the Jews, Chriſt ſhall have Completed, and even Reſign'd up his Kingdom of Grace. ——But,

4. The Authors of the New Teſtament were ſo well Advertis'd of that large diſtance of time which ſhould paſs betwixt the Firſt and Second Coming of our Saviour, that they have made a careful Proviſion againſt thoſe Prejudices and Inconveniencies, which

which might ariſe to the Goſpel upon that very Account. Hence the Duties of Patience, Long-ſuffering, and Watchfulneſs are inculcated to every Pious Chriſtian, who after a faithful expectation of the Day of Chriſt, ſhall begin to ſay with *David*, *My Soul is athirſt for God, yea even for the Living God, when ſhall I come to appear before the preſence of God.* Hence all diſtruſtful and repining Perſons are tacitly reprov'd in that Parable of the Evil Servant, who began to ſay in his Heart, *My Lord delayeth his coming*, (Mat. 24. 48.) and ſo preſuming on the diſtance of his Great Account, fell into ſome Irreligious Habits of Intemperance and Oppreſſion. Hence likewiſe St. *Peter* takes care to obviate the Reflexions of thoſe Scoffers, which he foreſaw in the laſt Days: Men who ſhould tauntingly upbraid our Lord with the Tardineſs of his Appearance, and ſay, *where is the Promiſe of his Coming?* (2 Pet. 3. 4.) in Anſwer to which, He obſerves that the Days of the Goſpel ſhould be indeed ſhort in a Divine, however long they may appear in an Human Senſe. For that one Day is with the Lord, as a Thouſand Years, and a Thouſand Years as one Day. *The Lord* (ſays he) *is not ſlack in his Promiſe, as ſome Men count ſlackneſs.* Whence it is eaſie to infer, that St. *Peter* did indeed acknowledge a Succeſſion of more than a Thouſand Years to the Day of Doom: Though having a lively Senſe of the Counſels of God, and the great Circle of Eternity, He and the other Apoſtles ſpake otherwiſe of that Space as of a little time.

But thus much may ſuffice from the poſitive Aſſertion of the Authors of the New Teſtament, from their Account of the Riſe and Fall of *Antichriſt*, from their Promiſe of the ſpreading of the Goſpel, and from that Proviſion they have made againſt what may be ob-

objected from the delay of Chriſt, to ſhew that they were not poſſeſſed of an Opinion, that the Judgment of the Great Day ſhould ſo quickly be Revealed. To which we may farther add, that in the Revelations of St. *John*, there occurs an expreſs Prophecy of a *Thouſand Years* : Of which whatſoever may be the ſecret Meaning, yet here is a direct Mention of a large and conſiderable tract of time, to be accompliſh'd in this, and not in another World. From hence therefore, as well as from what was before Alledg'd, I ſhall not now ſcruple to conclude, that the words of my Text, as alſo thoſe Parallel Scriptures which ſeem to ſpeak of Chriſt's Second Coming as near at hand, could not reaſonably be Interpreted, even in the Apoſtles Times, concerning any Sudden Diſſolution of the World. —Therefore,

Secondly, I now come to enquire what is that true and genuine Senſe, which then, and now, and always will agree to this, and the like Paſſages of Holy Writ. And in order to this, I ſhall here inſiſt upon four different Conſiderations, from which, if rightly applied, we may form a plain and eaſie Interpretation of thoſe I have above-mentioned, and all other Places of Holy Scripture, which ſpeak of the End, and Chriſt's Second Coming, as near at hand. Therefore,

1. We are to conſider, that the Goſpel was at firſt Preach'd to the Jewiſh People, upon whom the Sentence of God for the Subverſion of their Commonwealth, and the Deſolation of their Sanctuary, was ſhortly to be Accompliſhed. For *Daniel* had included the laſt Period of their Government, from the return of the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, to the final Overthrow of *Jeruſalem*, in Seventy Prophetick Weeks.

Now theſe being computed according to our ordinary Denomination of time, will produce the ſpace of 490 Years: Of which, but 41 were now remaining, when our Saviour firſt began to Preach, after his Baptiſm in the River *Jordan*. 'Twas therefore this ſudden impending Doom, decreed within the ſpace of one Generation, to overtake this unhappy People, that the Inſpir'd Writers ſo often repreſented to them as the End of all things, and the Coming of the Son of Man. *The Coming of the Son of Man*; becauſe in revenge of thoſe Indignities which they had offer'd to His Sacred Perſon, He ſhould joyn with the *Roman* Armies before *Jeruſalem*, under the Character of the Deſtroying Angel; and (as the Hiſtory of the Siege informs us) repay one by innumerable Crucifixions. *The End of all things*; becauſe, upon the Deſtruction of any People, 'tis all one to them, as if even Time it ſelf and Succeſſion ſhould be no more. For though ſingle Perſons have another ſort of Exiſtence after the Diſſolution of Soul and Body; yet to a Diſſolv'd Nation, there is no future State. For this reaſon, as whatſoever is commenſurate to the continuance of any People, has been always ſtil'd and accounted Everlaſting; ſo whatſoever ſhall at length put a final Period to their Community, may Literally be call'd the End. Moſt true therefore, in reſpect to the Jewiſh Oeconomy, was that expreſſion of our Bleſſed Saviour, (*Mark* 1. 15.) *The time is fulfilled:* As alſo that other which we read in St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel, (*Matt.* 16. 28.) *There be ſome ſtanding here, which ſhall not taſte of Death, till they ſee the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom.* For as this might eaſily be ſaid of many that were then his Auditors, ſo are we Hiſtorically aſſur'd that it was Completed in St. *John* the Evangeliſt: Which gives

gives a farther Light to that hint of our Bleſſed Saviour; (*John* 21. 22.) *If I will that He tarry till I come, what is that to Thee?* —But,

2. As after the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, whatſoever ſhould from thenceforth follow in the Annals of Futurity, was to be called the Times of the Gentile World; ſo this time of the Gentiles, of how long, or how ſhort continuance ſoever, might in a true and proper Senſe be called the End, the latter Days, and the laſt Time. For God ſeems to have diſtinguiſh'd the Age of the World into Three different ranks of time, according to thoſe different Revelations of himſelf, which He has been pleas'd to indulge to Mankind. The firſt of theſe may be reckon'd that ſpace of about Two Thouſand Years, in which God diſpenſed his Will to the Patriarchs, from *Adam* to *Abraham*. The Second is the ſame ſpace of about Two Thouſand Years, in which God Covenanted with *Abraham* and his Seed, till the Coming of the Meſſiah. The third is that ſpace, (I do not ſay as ſome have raſhly done, of about Two Thouſand Years, but) of a certain Indefinite time, from the Meſſiah to the Day of Judgment. This therefore has received that laſt Form of Religion, and that laſt Diſpenſation of the Divine Will, which ſhall ever be manifeſted to the lower World. Which gave occaſion to St. *Paul* thus to expreſs himſelf, in the firſt Verſe of his *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*: *God who at ſundry times, and divers manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoke unto us by his Son.* Nor are we otherwiſe to underſtand our Saviour, when in the Goſpel of St. *John*, He ſays, *The Hour* (or as the Original Word may be rendred, the Seaſon) *is coming, and now is, when the Dead ſhall hear the Voice of the Son of God,*

i. e. We are now enter'rd upon that Stage of things, after which, no new Period of Time, or Character of Religion, ſhall Succeed: But this having begun with the Reſurrection of Chriſt, ſhall end with the Reſurrection of all Mankind. —— But,

3. If after theſe Two Conſiderations for the ſolving of ſuch Scriptures as ſpeak of the End, and Chriſt's Second Coming as near at Hand, there ſhall occur any ſuch Text as remains ſtill to be accounted for; it may probably be ſaid, that it was not ſo much Wrote to the firſt and intermediate receivers of Chriſtianity, as to thoſe upon whom the Ends of the World ſhould Literally fall. For the New Teſtament being a ſtanding Rule of Faith and Practice, throughout the ſeveral Stages of the Goſpel, from its firſt Infancy, to its extremeſt Age; it may reaſonably contain ſome Paſſages, for the peculiar Direction of thoſe in whom it ſhould Terminate, as well as of thoſe in whom it Began. Of this ſort of Scriptures, there are to be obſerved three plain and unconteſted Inſtances. The firſt of theſe, is that Injunction of St. *Paul* to *Timothy*; *Keep this commandment until the appearing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* (1 Tim. 6. 14.) For *Timothy* being ſo far removed from the Second Coming of our Saviour, this could not more properly be addreſt to him, than to all the ſucceſſive Readers of this Epiſtle; more particularly, thoſe very Perſons, in whoſe Hands it ſhould be found at the Sounding of the Laſt Trump. The Second is that Circumſtance of the Laſt Day mentioned by the ſame Apoſtle; (1 *Theſſ.* 4. 17.) *We which are alive, and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air.* By which words, St. *Paul* ranks himſelf, not with the then preſent Race of Mankind, but with thoſe, who after a long Succeſſion of Ages,

Ages, ſhould be found to be the Inhabitants of the Diſſolving World. The Third is, that laſt Conſolation of our Saviour, to the ſeveral ſucceeding Members of the Church: *Lo! I am with you always even to the end of the World.* (*Mat.* 28. 20.) *i. e.* not only with you with whom I now Converſe, not only with you, who ſhall next receive my Goſpel, but even with you alſo, whom I ſhall find Alive at the time of my Second Coming. But,

4. Beſides theſe Three general Conſiderations, for the Solution of thoſe Texts of which I am now Diſcourſing, I ſhall at length add, that there is indeed a Strict, Proper, and Literal Senſe, in which the End, the Laſt Day, and the Coming of the Lord is near at Hand. For truly and ſincerely ſpeaking, as near as is the Day of Death, ſo near alſo is the Day of Judgment. That is to be Accounted laſt to every Man, which is laſt in his State of Tryal: That which Cloſes the Character of his Life, and which Seals up the Numbers of his Words and Actions, never more to be Opened till the General Reſurrection. Nay, this Great Concern is Anticipated to ſome Men, even before their Departure hence. *He that believeth not, is Condemned already*, ſays St. *John*, (John 3. 18.) And others, St. *Peter* tells us of, *Whoſe Judgment of a long time lingreth not, and their Damnation ſlumbereth not.* (2 Pet. 2. 3.) At leaſt at the minute of Diſſolution each particular Perſon undergoes a particular Judgment, which in that Univerſal one of the Great Day, ſhall farther be Confirm'd to him. After the Aſſertion of which Truth, I need not now explain, in what Senſe *the Lord is at Hand*; or rather in what Senſe it is that the *Judge ſtandeth before the Door:* Which is the expreſſion of that Verſe that

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immediately precedes my Text. For theſe are thoſe Summons which cite the greateſt and the leaſt of Men, to a ſpeedy meeting with their Judge. Three-ſcore Years and Ten ſhall Tranſmit us all into that General Aſſembly, where the Firſt and the Laſt are to meet together. And, without any difference as to our Spiritual and Immortal State, we ſhall ſoon go to Chriſt, if Chriſt does not come to us. —— But thus much may at length ſuffice for an Account of my Text, and other parallel Places in Holy Scripture which ſpeak of the End, and Chriſt's Second Coming as near at Hand. I come now therefore,

II. *In the Second Place to conſider how far all bold Enquirers into the time of the laſt Judgment, tend not only to diſturb the good Order of the World, but likewiſe to fruſtrate the moſt Subſtantial and moſt Noble Duties of our Religion.* —— Having thus far conſider'd that Senſe in which the true Prophets of the Goſpel told us, even in the firſt Infancy of Chriſtianity, that the Coming of the Lord drew nigh; let us now proceed to the Examination of thoſe * Falſe Prophets, who in theſe Riper Ages of the Goſpel, would Surpriſe us with the ſame Words: And this, not by any Authority from Above, but by the Juſt Judgment of God upon ſome Perverſe and Arrogant Underſtandings, who is often pleas'd to Blaſt the moſt uſeful Knowledge, and to turn the deepeſt Wiſdom into Folly. Thus, (to omit other Studies more foreign to the Subject of Religion) the greateſt Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorian is capable of becoming the great-

* See Appendix. Num. 7. and 8.

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eſt Schiſmatick, and the Incomparable Diſcoveries of Chronology have ſometimes dwindled into Prophecy. Nor is it the leaſt Aggravation of theſe Evils that they generally prove Incurable : Since for what theſe Men are Pitied by Mankind, that they themſelves * paſſionately admire, and doubt only, whether there is more of Learning or Piety in their Laborious Schemes. Now I know not what degree of Learning it may be thought to have Spun out the exact Annals of the time to come : What Depth of Judgment it may ſeem, to gueſs Boldly at that Day and Hour which God has reſolutely Conceal'd both from Man and Angel : What Prudence to be always prying into the Secrets of a Future Providence, and wearying out a ſhort Life with the Burden of Eternal Counſels. But the Learning of theſe Performances is a Conſideration of another Sort : Nor ſhall I endeavour any more at preſent, than only to take away the Boaſt of Piety from theſe Bold Enquirers into the Day of Judgment, and to ſhew that inſtead of any Service to Reaſon or Religion, they contribute as far as in them lies, 1. To Diſturb the good Order and Oeconomy of the World ; 2. To Fruſtrate the moſt Subſtantial Virtues of Chriſtianity ; And 3. To take away one peculiar Duty which I ſhall ſhew to be the Great Ornament and Glory of our Religion. —— Therefore,

1. It is to be charg'd upon all Bold Enquirers, into the Time of the Laſt Judgment, that they contribute as far as in them lies, to Diſturb the good Order and Oeconomy of the World. ——And here, if we rather urge theſe Men with the Pernicious

* See *Scioppius* among *Voſſius*'s Epiſtles. Epiſt. 587.

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Conſequence of their Opinions, than with the actual Miſchief they have done; this is wholly owing to their own Monſtrous Abſurdity, and to that ſounder Reaſon which God has Planted in the Majority of Mankind. In the mean time, they are ſtrictly Anſwerable for all that Collective Evil they endeavour to introduce, whilſt they Prophecy the Death of Nature, and Alarm the World with the News of its Sudden Diſſolution. To Compute the Extent of this Injury, let us conſider it as the Caſe of any ſingle Perſon; who, if Providentially inform'd of his Approaching End, immediately becomes uſeleſs to the Community in which he Lives; he ſtraitway deſerts his Calling and his Station, and caſts the things of this World behind him. Much more, when the Fate of all things is declar'd, when the Earth and each Inhabitant of the Earth are Summon'd to an Univerſal Change, muſt this needs induce a ſtate of Amazement and Confuſion: it muſt neceſſarily arreſt the whole courſe of Polity, and put a ſtop to all the Induſtry and Ingenuity of Mankind. For this Reaſon, God has Wiſely Conceal'd their End from the *Leſſer* and the *Greater World.* And tho' upon weighty Accounts He has Admitted ſome Exceptions in the Former; yet as to the Latter, He has ſet to His Seal, that it is a Venerable and Eternal Secret: a Secret which He has committed to no Order of Rational Beings; no, not even to the Breaſt of His Beloved Son: A Secret, of which we have this only Revelation in the Holy Scripture, *That it is never to be Revealed.* True indeed it is, that we are told of ſome Signs which ſhall be Previous to the Day of Judgment, but none ſuch as can Juſtifie the Pretences of this Bold Inquiry. For either they are ſuch as ſhall immediately precede the Judgment; and ſo may be

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ſaid to Introduce, rather than Foretel it: Of which ſort, ſhall be our Lord's own Appearing in the Clouds. Or elſe, they are ſuch Signs as in the Courſe of God's Providence ſhall be Antecedent to the Laſt Day, yet without pointing at, or much influencing its Approach: Of which ſort, ſhall be Earthquakes, Revolutions, Wars, and Rumours of Wars. Theſe ought we ſeriouſly to regard, as we would Old Age, or other ordinary Frailties of Human Body: at which nevertheleſs no Man is ſo ſtartled, as to renounce his Profeſſion, or to quit that Duty which he owes to Himſelf, his Family, or his Country. But when Men, who break in upon the Counſels of their Maker, ſhall pretend to Calculate the Period of the Univerſe, and to Foretel the time of its Expiration, in the midſt of its Health and Vigour; what elſe do they endeavour, than, by this Surpriſe, to Damp the Happy Progreſs of Arts and Sciences; to Diſſolve Societies, to Stop the courſe of Juſtice, to Diſcourage the benefit of Education, and to Extinguiſh the very Hopes and Proſpect of a Poſterity. Were things once reduced to theſe wretched Circumſtances, the End of the World would perhaps ſuddenly Enſue: Yet not for any Reaſon foreſeen by our Uninſpir'd Prophets; but becauſe, in this ſtagnating Condition, it were hardly worth preſerving. Having thus loſt that Salt, by which it hitherto had been Seaſon'd, it muſt needs become Inſipid to its Creator, and retain nothing which might deſerve the farther Care of ſo Immenſe a Providence. But we are aſſur'd from better Oracles, that no Diſpenſation of Religion ſhall ever Interfere with the juſt and neceſſary Affairs of Mankind: No, not even that which ſhall at length Tranſlate them to an

Eternal Scene. We well know that the Conflagration, as well as the Deluge, ſhall overtake us all ſeverally employ'd in the moſt Minute and Accidental Offices of our Calling: *i. e. Some in the Houſe, and ſome on the Houſe Top; Two in the Bed; Two in the Field; and Two at the Mill*; Characters, by which a great Truth is convey'd to us with a great Simplicity, and by which we are taught that Nature ſhall at laſt paſs away, without any previous Diſorder in the Oeconomy of the World. —But,

2. It is to be charged upon all Bold Enquirers into the Time of the Laſt Judgment, that they contribute, as far as in them lies, to Fruſtrate the moſt Subſtantial Virtues of Chriſtianity. —The moſt Subſtantial Virtues of Chriſtianity, are thoſe which either conduce to, or which are contain'd in an habit of Chriſtian Watchfulneſs. For thoſe which conduce to it, are a Sobriety, a Fear, a Trembling, a Concern for the Welfare of the Soul: But thoſe which are contain'd in it, are a Patience, a Perſeverance, an unſhaken Hope, an effectual Faith, an Heroick Love of God. By this means, every Chriſtian Watchman lives under a conſtant and unmoleſted Guard: his Diligence defeats the Subtilty as well as violence of the Tempter, and makes the largeſt Steps, that are poſſible in a fall'n Eſtate, towards the meaſures of an unſinning Obedience. 'Twas therefore the Wiſe and Holy Precept of our Lord to His Apoſtles, and to us all, *to Watch.* And this wide, this comprehenſive Duty of Watchfulneſs, he founds upon that Uncertainty, under which we all remain of the time of his Second Coming: Conſiding, that becauſe we know not when He is to come, we ſhould conclude that He is always Coming; and therefore live over each

each Day, as if it were the Day of Judgment. But now by how Bold and how Impious a ſtroke does the confidence of ſome Men cut aſunder theſe Nerves of our Religion! while 'tis the ſtanding Injunction of our Saviour, *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the Day nor the Hour* (i. e. *the Seaſon*) *in which the Son of Man cometh*; Theſe Men can gravely diſmiſs us from this Duty; and defeat the reaſon of it: *for*, ſay they, *we know the Seaſon and the Day in which the Son of Man ſhall Come.* But they conſider not, that whatever Period they ſhall fix to theſe raſh Predictions, they muſt unhappily ſplit on either ſide on one inevitable Abſurdity, to the very Unhinging and Diſſolving of all Religion. For if they allow any longer diſtance of Time for the expectation of the Univerſal Doom, they then immediately induce a State of Supineneſs and Security: they give occaſion to every Idle Servant, to Eat and to Drink with the Drunken, on Preſumption that his Lord will delay His Coming. But if on the other ſide they Alarm us with a ſudden Warning; if they call us to meet Chriſt as already come to Judgment, if they tell us He is here, He is there, in the Street, or on the Houſe-top; then are they nothing elſe but the Unwarranted and Uncommiſſion'd Authors of Surpriſe, of Hurry, and Confuſion. They Inſpire, no doubt, the laſt degree of Dread into ſome unſtable Minds: But yet ſuch as is far removed from the powerful Motions of Religion: as far as a juſt ſenſe of Awe is from that of Deſpair, and the tremblings of an Humble Conſcience, from the Failings of the Heart for fear. The firſt of theſe Conditions is the Caſe of a Wiſe Steward: who having faithfully digeſted his whole Account, waits with a compos'd, but care-

ful Mind, till his Lord, at his return, ſhall demand it of him. But the Second, is the Caſe of a Profligate and Idle Servant : who ſtarting at his Maſters Call from a deep Sleep, perhaps, or a Debauch, begins at length to heap together his confus'd Particulars : and under the Difficulties of Fright and Diſtraction, produces probably an Unjuſt, but to be ſure, a very Lame and Imperfect Reckoning. Thus would our untimely Monitors, either Lull the World into a Security, or Enchant it into Wildneſs and Confuſion : and this by no leſs an Attempt, than by wreſting out of the hands of an All-wiſe Saviour, one Sacred Helm by which he ſteers the Veſſel of the Church : I mean the Uncertainty of the Day of Judgment. For this is that Guard upon unwary Souls, and that Spring of all our Vigilance, deſign'd by an unerring Providence to keep up a due temper in Religion, checking each Chriſtian Conſcience by a juſt Concern, but overthrowing none by a Surpriſe.—— But,

3. It is to be charg'd upon all Bold Enquirers into the time of the Laſt Judgment, that they Contribute, as far as in them lies, to take away one peculiar Duty, which I ſhall prove to be the great Ornament and Glory of our Religion. —— If the Day of Judgment be from ever indiſpenſably determin'd, without any regard to the growing Stature of the Church, and the Numbers of the Elect ; if without Reaſon, and againſt Revelation, theſe Men are indeed able to point out the hidden Time ; if they dare take away that thick Veil which God has thrown over ſo profound a Secret ; then is it in Vain, nay, then is it Unwarrantable,

rantable, that we * Pray for the Day of Judgment. Yet are they the moſt Holy Words of our Lord's Prayer, that the Kingdom of God would come; yet is it the daily Petition of the Univerſal Church, that God would accompliſh the number of his Elect, in a ſpeedy Reſurrection to Eternal Life. And in this very Petition it is, that we can boaſt of ſo great a Guard, and ſo great a Glory to our Religion. For what greater Guard has the Church of God on the Conſcience of all its Members, than by preparing them for the Day of Judgment, while it enjoyns them to Pray for it: and by preſuming that no wretch will be ſo hardy as to call upon his Maſter for the paſſing of that Great Account, which He knows He muſt make with Grief and not with Joy. On the other ſide, what greater Glory to our Religion, than to be thus happily advanc'd above the Apprehenſion of any Worldly Evil, whilſt by this means we are inur'd to contemn it in its moſt Dreadful and Collective Force. What Calamity can ever ſhake the Courage of thoſe Men,

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* Tertullian *de Oratione, Cap.* 5. *Si ad Dei voluntatem, & ad noſtram ſuſpenſionem pertinet regni Dominici repræſentatio, quomodo Quidam protractum quendam ſeculo poſtulant; cum Regnum Dei, quod ut adveniat oramus, ad conſummationem ſeculi tendat? Optamus maturius regnare, & non diutius ſervire.* This Father indeed derogates in another work from what he has aſſerted ſo Religiouſly in this, by reckoning up (in his *Apolog.* cap. 39.) the *Mora Finis* among other particulars of the Chriſtian Prayers. But this ſeems to have been but the peculiar Practice of ſome few, as appears by the foregoing words. *Quidam protractum quendam ſeculo poſtulant.* And in truth the reaſon given for it by *Tertullian*, is altogether as peculiar. *Vim maximam orbi univerſo imminentem, ipſamq; clauſulam ſeculi acerbitates horrendas comminantem, Romani imperii commeatu ſcimus retardari. Itaq; nolumus experiri, & dum precamur differri, Romanæ diuturnitati favemus.* Apol. cap. 32.

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who are Commanded by an Almighty Saviour to lift up their Heads, and to look for their Redemption, when the Powers of Heaven begin to ſhake, and the Elements to melt away with fervent heat. Far from being concern'd at any partial ruin, at ſeeing our ſelves, or any other Limb lopt off from this Harmonious Frame; we long for the Diſſolution of the Whole: and look upon the deſtruction of this lower World, as ſomething ſtill wanting to the Perfection of God's Creation. It were now eaſie in this place, to give the Hiſtory of Faith and Reaſon in relation to this important Article: and to ſhew how Reaſon has always ſubmitted to theſe Fears, which Faith has made the Subject of our Joy. But this advantage of Faith above Reaſon, may perhaps be more effectually repreſented by one ſhort Reflection on the example of Two Perſons, who were the Champions of them both: I mean, the *great Apoſtle*, and the bold *Epicurean Poet*. For though the bold *Epicurean Poet*, confiding in the ſweetneſs of his Verſe, ſeems to think himſelf always trampling on Religion, and charming the thorn of Fear out of the Mind of Man; yet being at length arriv'd at the (*a*) Conſideration of the death of Nature, he ſhrinks, he changes colour, and turns all his Scoffings and Deriſions on himſelf. (*b*) Straitway in his fear he makes a God, and (*c*) then prays to it to remove far from his head

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(*a*) ——— *Maria ac Terras cælumq; tuere.*
Horum naturam triplicem, tria corpora, Memmi,
Una dies dabit exitio: Multoſq; per annos
Suſtentata ruet moles, & machina mundi. Lucret. lib. 5. v. 93.

(*b*) According to his own exploded Maxim, *Deos fecit timor.*—

(*c*) *Quod procul a nobis fiectat Fortuna gubernans;*
Et ratio potius quam res perſuadeat ipſa
Succidere horriſono poſſe omnia victa fragore. verſ. 107.

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the execution of ſo great an Evil; to convince him by Reaſon, and not by Fact, of the certainty of ſo aſtoniſhing a Truth. But the great Apoſtle, diſcourſing on the ſame Subject, is ſo ſtedfaſt, as to bid us *comfort one another with theſe words:* (1 Theſſ. 4. 8.) he encourages us by a Glorious and All-powerful Expreſſion, to *Love the Appearing of the Righteous Judge.* (2 Tim. 4. 8.) He groans with the whole Creation to be *deliver'd from the Bondage of Corruption:* (Rom. 8. 21.) nor can time it ſelf run faſter towards Eternity, than he earneſtly deſires to be receiv'd into it. Hence therefore learn the Strength and the Beauty of Chriſtianity: here take the Specimens of its real Excellence, and the certainty of its Divine Original. But judge at the ſame time, what can be the Piety of theſe Men, who would rob it of ſo great a Glory: Who by inſpiring a vicious Curioſity, would unqualifie us for Praying for the Day of Judgment; and who, by repreſenting the ſame day as diſcoverable to human Reaſon, would unqualify that too for being the Object of our Prayer. But theſe Dreams ſhall paſs away as the ſhadows of the Morning, while the Counſel of the Lord ſhall ſtand. God ſhall quickly call his Church into its Triumphant State: Yet not in Conformity to any Schemes of theirs, but in compliance with our All-powerful Interceſſor, and the fervent Prayers of his Elect. Then ſhall it be diſcerned, who it is that has moſt ſucceſsfully contemplated that Happy Day: whether He who, by making our *Hope ſeen*, would deſtroy the nature of our Chriſtian Hope, or he *who by hoping for that he ſees not, does with Patience wait for it.* (Rom. 8. 24.)

But thus much may ſuffice for the laſt general Head of this Diſcourſe, under which I was to conſider *how far all bold Inquirers into the time of the Laſt Judgment,*

Judgment, tend not only to diſturb the good Order of the World, but likewiſe to fruſtrate the moſt Subſtantial and moſt Noble Duties of Chriſtianity. ——It now only remains, that neither dreading its Approach, nor preſuming on its Delay, we reverence this dread Secret of Religion, the unalterable uncertainty of the Day of Judgment: That we permit it to obtain all thoſe powerful effects upon our Mind, for which God has ſcreen'd it and fenc'd it with ſo thick a Darkneſs: That neither our Lives, nor our Speculations, ever thwart the Wiſdom of our Saviour, who by threatning to come upon us as a Thief in the Night, maintains one continued Watch through all the Ages of the Goſpel: That we never quit our ſhare in that Glory of the Church, the Glory of Praying for the Conſummation of all things: yet never preſuming this, without a well-grounded Confidence, and a juſt Preſage of our partaking in the Triumphs of that Day. Whilſt we ſtand thus prepar'd with our Loins girt, and our Feet ſhod, and our Hearts reſign'd up to God's unſearchable Counſels, the ſuccours of his Grace ſhall ſtrengthen our imperfect Reſolutions, and ſhall teach us to long for, and to confide in the Coming of our Saviour: that ſo when He ſhall beſpeak us in the language of the Revelations, *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me*, we may cheerfully reply with St. *John*, and ſay, *Even ſo come, Lord Jeſus*, Amen.

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AN

APPENDIX

OF

Hiſtorical Matters and Obſervations,

Applicable to all ſuch

PROPHECIES

As are Condemned in the foregoing Diſcourſe, and to thoſe which are now venting in the World.

THE firſt Deſign of this Diſcourſe, was occaſion'd by a deep Concern to ſee ſo many wild Pamphlets Publiſh'd towards the end of the laſt Century, fixing with great aſſurance the Second Coming of our Saviour, and reviving thoſe Mad Doctrines, which were delivered ſome Years ſince by Mr. *Maſon*, and his Aſſociates. But that which at laſt determin'd me to handle the Subject, in the manner I have here done, was the conſideration

of this Phantom, having appear'd ſo often in different Ages of the Goſpel. Of this therefore I have here ſubjoyn'd an Hiſtory, digeſted into Eight remarkable Examples: of which ſome will appear to be the Errors of Pious and well-meaning Men; but others to be the Deluſions of Profligate and Wicked Perſons that would impoſe upon Mankind. And ſince our New Fraternity of Prophets is to be divided, moſt probably, betwixt the one and the other Character; 'tis to be hop'd they may all reap uſeful Advice from theſe Collections. Thoſe who are ſincere in their Pretences may (*a*) learn to abhor an Error, that has left a Blemiſh, even on ſome Saints and Fathers of the Church. But thoſe who are now acting a Wicked Part, on which the Judgment of God has been ſo often and ſo ſignally reveal'd, may conclude, without the Gift of Prophecy, that while they tread in the ſame ſteps, they may too ſoon arrive, if they repent not, at the ſame unhappy End.

I.

Euſeb. Eccleſ. Hiſt. Lib. 6. Cap. 7. An. Dom. 204.

Ἐν τούτῳ δέ, Ἰούδας συγγράφεων ἕτερος &c. i. e. *About the ſame time another Writer, one* Judas, *diſcourſing in his works upon the ſeventy Weeks of* Daniel, *fix'd that account of Time to the Tenth Year of the Reign of* Severus, *and was of Opinion, that the celebrated Appearance of Antichriſt drew near. So very much did the Riſe of that Perſecution, then ſet on foot againſt us, diſorder the minds of ſome Men.*

(*a*) As *Tertullian*, S. *Cyprian*, and *Lactantius*; all which were too poſitive concerning the near approach of the End.

II.

Spondani Epit. Bar. Anno 255. § 5.

Quod pertinet ad excitatam perſecutionem. i. e. *As to the Perſecution of that Time, by which, as* Dionyſius *of* Alexandria *complains, ſo many Holy Men were moſt cruelly tormented, we may judge to what degree it was carried, from ſome Paſſages of* S. Cyprian. *For he, upon that account, was of opinion, that the end of the World, and the time of Antichriſt, drew near.*

And in truth, nothing can be more expreſs than the words of that Father here referr'd to by *Baronius. Scire enim debetis,* ſays he, *&c.* i. e. *You are to know aſſuredly, and to believe and hold it as a certain truth, that the end of the World, and the time of Antichriſt, is at hand.* See *Cyprian's* 58th Epiſtle in the late *Oxford* Edition, and the Preface to the Book he wrote, *De exhortatione Martyrii.* To which may be added, what we read of the ſame Perſuaſion, *Anno Dom.* 259. *Viz.* Sæviit uſq; adeo Perſecutio, *&c.* i. e. *The Perſecution under* Valerian *raged to that degree, that the ſame* Dionyſius *interpreted thoſe unhappy times of* Antichriſt, *foretold by St.* John *in the Revelations, to be fulfil'd in the Reign of that Emperor.*

III.

Baron. An. 1001. Tom. 11. pag. 1. Edit. Rom.

Novum ſeculum, *&c.* i. e. *The New Century begins with the Year* 1001, *a Year, which, by the vain Aſſertion of ſome Men, had been foretold to be the laſt of the World. At leaſt, it was ſuppoſed to be near the laſt: becauſe in that forſooth, was to be revealed that Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, ſurnamed Antichriſt. Theſe Notions had been firſt Publiſh'd in* France, *Preach'd at* Paris, *and by this time grown common through-*

out the World: being believ'd by moſt, receiv'd with great concern by the more ſimple, but rejected by all of any Learning. For among others, Abbon, *Abbot of* Fleuri, *a Man eminent for Learning and Piety, ſays he look'd upon himſelf obliged to endeavour the Refutation of that Error from the Holy Scriptures, in an Apology which he Wrote and Dedicated to* Hugo *and* Robert, *then Kings of* France.

Part of this work of *Abbon's, Baronius* has inſerted in his Annals, and is as follows. *In the Church of* Paris, *being then a young Man, I heard a Sermon before the People concerning the End of the World: in which it was aſſerted, that upon the completion of a Thouſand Years, Antichriſt ſhould preſently appear, and not long after, the Univerſal Judgment ſhould enſue.—— For a Report had ſpread every where throughout the World, that when* Lady-Day *ſhould fall on* Eaſter-Eve, *without all doubt the World was at an End.*

IV.

Baron. An. 1106. Tom. 12. pag. 51.

Quod pertinet ad Antichriſtum fuit quidem opinio non vulgarium virorum, &c. i. e. *As to the affair of Antichriſt, it was the Opinion even of ſome conſiderable Perſons, that Antichriſt was to be revealed in this Century. Among others, of* Norbert, *a Man very eminent in this time: Concerning whom, St.* Bernard *thus writes to* Geofry *of* Chartres. *When I lately had the honour to ſee the face of* Norbert, *and to receive ſeveral things from his heavenly Mouth, I did not indeed hear ſo much from him himſelf. But when I deſir'd to know his thoughts of Antichriſt, he proteſted he knew moſt certainly, that he was to be revealed in this preſent Generation.*

Baro-

Baronius *had indeed good reaſon to call this the Opinion of no inconſiderable Perſons. For* Norbert, *as well as* Bernard, *is a great Saint of the Church of* Rome, *once Arch-Biſhop of* Magdeburgh, *and Founder of the Premonſtratenſian Order, whoſe Reliques I have ſeen Worſhip'd with great Devotion, by his own Monks at* Prague, *and lying under a Gilt Crown of prodigious Dimenſions, at leaſt three Ells diameter in the Ring. But beſides* S. Norbert, *the ſurpriſe of this time had, it ſeems, reach'd the infallible Chair it ſelf. For, as our Annaliſt in the ſame place informs us, Pope* Paſchal II. *had ordered his Progreſs into* Lombardy : *where He had then Summoned the Council of* Guaſtalla *to be celebrated in* October. *But being on his way thither, he halted a while at* Florence, *on account of a general Report He there found, of Antichriſt being ſuddenly to appear. But upon conſideration, underſtanding the vanity of that Diſcourſe, He proſecuted his intended Journey.*

Tis to be obſerv'd, that what Baronius *calls an Halt of the Popes at* Florence, Platina, *and other Authors, make a very large* (a) *Council, in which* Fluentius, *Biſhop of that place was Cenſur'd, for having divulg'd, out of a vain Ambition to make himſelf the Author of ſome great matter, that Antichriſt was already Born. Be that matter as it will, every one will obſerve that Pope* Paſchal *was at a Loſs for his Infallibility ; and ſome may perhaps add, even for Human Prudence, upon this occaſion. For whatever it was that* Norbert, *good Man, intended ; 'tis poſſible, that by Antichriſt being near at hand, thoſe* Florentines *meant nothing elſe but that very Journey of* His Holineſs.

(a) *Binii* Concil. Tom. 3. part 2. pag. 438. B. Edit Colon. 1618.

V.

V.

Th. Campanella Append. ad Mon. Hiſp. pag. 358 edit. Amſt. 1653.

Hiſtoriæ cum ipſa experientia atteſtantur, *&c.* i. e. *All Hiſtory as well as Experience teſtifies, that they who endeavour to reſtrain the ſenſe of Scripture to particular Times and Places, are much in the wrong. On which Subject,* Werner Rolewink *in his* Faſciculus temporum, *writes under the year* 1364. *after this manner.* Joannes de Rupe-ſciſſa, *a Minorite Fryer, foretold ſeveral matters that were ſhortly to come to paſs concerning Two Antichriſts, the Deſolation of Nations, the entire Oppreſſion of the Clergy, and the Reduction of the whole World to the Faith of Chriſt before the year of the Lord* 1370. *All which he pretended to have been revealed to him by the Lord Jeſus, though none of them ever yet come to paſs. But the Author lay long in Priſon, writing Wonders of* the time to come.

Theſe wonders have been preſerv'd very luckily by the Careful and Induſtrious Mr. *Brown*, in the Second Volume of his *Faſciculus rer. expetend. & fugiend.* And whoever is Maſter of ſo much leiſure, may there compare them with the late *Warnings of* Mr. *La-——y, and the Cry from the Deſart of the ſame Author.* But if that Game be indeed playing from the ſame Quarter, to which we owe ſo many other wild Fanaticiſms, ſince the Reformation of Religion, 'tis to be wiſh'd, the Zeal of that honeſt Editor were remark'd at the ſame time, who in his Preface to thoſe Effuſions of *De Rupe-ſciſſa*, puts in, as well as his Author, for the Plea of Prophecy. *Eum ſi Prophetam ignoſcas, pari ratione me quoque talem potes appellare ; qui tibi Angliam Jeſuitis, peſtilentiſſimis Rei-publicæ hoſtibus, & monachis inſulſis liberatum iri brevi ſpondeo, ne res eis ad reſtim redigatur.* —— The meaning

meaning of which words, may be put into plain English thus. *If this Fellow paſſes for a Prophet, you may allow me to be a Prophet at the ſame rate. For I can foretell, that unleſs the Jeſuits and other Miſſionaries leave off playing their Juggles in this Nation, they may chance to Dye Martyrs for their pains.* See Faſcic. rer. expetend. & fugiend. Tom. 2. pag. 493.

VI.

Id. Th. Campanella ibidem, pag. 361.

Chriſtianus Wurſtiſius in Chronica ſua Baſileenſi, &c. *Chriſtianus Wurſtiſius in his Chronicle of* Baſil, *makes mention of one* Nicolas a Buldesdorf, *who in the year* 1446, *going into the Council of* Baſil, *Surnam'd himſelf the Angelic Paſtor, and Proclaim'd, that by him Antichriſt ſhould be deſtroyed, the* Jews *deliver'd from Captivity, the Church collected out of all Nations, the Wicked extirpated, with ſeveral other things of the ſame nature: upon which he was puniſhed as an Heretick. Yet ſeveral years after this,* (viz. an. 1534.) *the Anabaptiſts of* Munſter *ſet up with the ſame confidence, and with a very conſiderable Force begun to put their deſigns in execution, juſtifying them (as* Sleidan *tells us) by a peculiar Treatiſe which they Publiſh'd and Entituled* the (*a*) Reſtitution.

(*a*) Durante obſidione librum conſcribunt & edunt, Reſtitutionem ipſi vocant, &c. fol. 128. *i. e. During the Siege, they Write and Publiſh a Book Entituled by them, the* Reſtitution. *In this Book, they declare among other things, that the Kingdom of Chriſt muſt come before the Day of Judgment: in which the Godly and Elect ſhould Reign, but all the Wicked be every where deſtroy'd. They declare likewiſe, that the People might lawfully depoſe their Magiſtrates: and that without any Commiſſion from the Apoſtles, the preſent Miniſters ought to uſe the power of the Sword, and conſtitute a New Government. Withal, that no one was to be Tolerated in the Church, except he were really a true Chriſtian: And laſtly, that it was impoſſible for any Perſon to be ſav'd, unleſs he brought all his Wealth into the Publick Stock, and left nothing that he could call his own.*

Thus

Thus far *Campanella:* But to give the truer Idea of that Tragedy, I ſhall here tranſcribe a piece or two out of the Hiſtorian above-mentioned.

Their Principles (as far as I am at preſent concern'd to Note them) he delivers in theſe words. Hoc eſſe tempus quod prænuntiarint omnes Prophetæ, *&c.* i. e. *That this was the time foretold by all the Prophets in which God would have Righteouſneſs obſerved throughout the world: and that aſſoon as* (*a*) their King *in the execution of his Office, had advanc'd things ſo far that Righteouſneſs reign'd in all places, then at length ſhould Chriſt deliver the Kingdom into his Fathers hands.* Sleid. Hiſt. fol. 129. Argent. 1558.

Upon theſe pretences they had now poſſeſs'd themſelves of the City and Government of *Munſter:* where during their ſhort Reign, they gave ſuch a Specimen of the Spirit they were acted by; that I ſhall not preſume to deſcribe it by any words of mine, but leave the Reader to be his own Judge, from the paſſage I ſhall here annex. Ad hoc tempus primi nominis apud ipſos Propheta, *&c. At this time,* John Matthews *the Prophet of chief rank amongſt them (for they uſurp'd to themſelves the ſtile of Prophecy) gave or-*

(*a*) The King they conſtituted, was called *John* of *Leyden,* who by his own and the new Prophecies of a *Goldſmith,* compaſs'd that Point: with Commiſſion, as they pretended, from Almighty God, to take into his poſſeſſion the Empire of the whole World. What became of him after the Reſtauration of the City, our Hiſtorian tells us, fol. 133. *Rex in locum editiorem,* &c. *i. e. The King being brought into a more conſpicuous place, was tyed to a Stake. He was attended by Two Executioners Arm'd with Red hot Pinchers. He held his Tongue during the three firſt Gripes. But afterwards, imploring conſtantly God's Mercy, when he had been torn in that manner, above an hour, he was at laſt ſtab'd through the Breaſt and Dyed. His Aſſociates likewiſe endured the ſame puniſhment.*

der,

der, that whatſoever Gold or Silver, or other moveable Goods, any Man was Maſter of, he ſhould produce it under pain of Death, and bring it into a Store-houſe they had provided for that purpoſe. The people aſtoniſh'd by this ſevere Edict, complyed therewith: nor was it poſſible for any one to eſcape or withhold any part of his Poſſeſſions. For Two Damſels, that were Propheteſſes, took care to give certain Information of any Concealment that was made. By chance, about the ſame time, a certain Smith, *by Name,* Hubert Tudeling, *had, in ſome Diſcourſes of his, happen'd to ridicule theſe Prophets, as they call'd themſelves. Which being diſcover'd, they Summon the Multitude, commanding them to aſſiſt in Arms, and immediately Indite and Condemn the Man to Death. The thing mightily ſurpriz'd the People. But the abovementioned chief Prophet ſeizes the poor Man, throws him on the ground, and then ſtabs him with a Spear: yet ſo, that the Wound was not Mortal, though he gave it with all his force. Afterwards he orders him to be remov'd, and then ſtrikes him as he lay upon the ground with a Club which he had ſnatch'd out of the hand of a by-ſtander. But having not yet diſpatch'd him with all this, the Prophet ſignifies he had a Revelation, that the Man's time was not yet come, and that God had favour'd him with his Grace. The Man however expir'd in a few days, and the Prophet himſelf, aſſoon as he was inform'd of it, run madly through the Croud with a long Spear in his hand, crying he was ſent by God to drive the Beſiegers from the City. And in that poſture he was preſently met and kill'd by a Soldier of the Camp.* Sleid. fol. 127.

VII.

Nothing ever look'd in good earneſt ſo like the End of the World, as the Diſtreſſes and Confuſions

of this Nation, during the late unnatural Rebellion. And, in truth, they operated accordingly upon many ſplenetic Diſpoſitions of that time. But on theſe I ſhall not here inlarge: as well, becauſe they are known too Familiarly already, as becauſe they ſeem to have proceeded from more Ignorance and leſs Deſign, than others of the ſame Century. 'Tis more remarkable that Two ſo great Scholars, as *Scioppius* and *Comenius*, ſhould affect to direct Princes, and their Prime Miniſters, by Rules they pretended to have obſerv'd from the Prophecies of *Daniel* and St. *John*. *Scioppius* reſented it very highly, that Cardinal *Mazarin* never liſten'd to his Viſions: "Though, as he "pretended, there never was either Father, or Do-"ctor of the Church, who ſo well underſtood the "Scripture, and from thence diſcover'd ſo undoubt-"edly the End of the World, and the Secrets of the "*Revelations*, as he had done. He gives a full account of his Abilities that way, in a *(a)* Letter he Wrote to *Voſſius* in the Year 1642. And there it is we are inform'd, that one of thoſe Enquiries, which with great Labour and Study he had long dwelt upon, was concerning the ſtate of the Laſt Day, when Time it ſelf ſhall be no more: Præſenti ſeculo (*ſays he*) veniente Patre futuri ſeculi: *i. e. The Everlaſting Father being to appear in this preſent Century.*

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Mon-

Monſieur *Facio*. And yet he condeſcended to become the Co-Adjutor of *Kotterus* and *Drabricius*, Two Viſionary Impoſtors of the laſt Century: attending upon them in the ſame quality that Monſieur *Facio* now attends upon *Elias Marion*. He Publiſh'd the Prophecies of them, and of *Chriſtina*, under the Title of *Lux in Tenebris*, in the year 1657: a Book which was afterwards Printed in *London*, 1664; and Entituled, *The Prophecies of Chriſtophorus Kotterus, Chriſtina, Poniatovia*, and *Nic. Drabricius*; *Three Famous German Prophets*. It was repeated again in the year 1666, with ſeveral Improvements, by *Comenius*: who by this time, was himſelf become ſuch a Proficient in *Prophecy*, that in the year following, he ſent his Arreſt to the *Engliſh* and *Dutch* Plenipotentiaries at *Breda*. It was a Book he Publiſh'd, and Addreſs'd to them under the enſuing Title: Angelus Pacis, *&c.* i. e. *The Angel of Peace ſent to the* Engliſh *and* Dutch *Embaſſadors of Peace, and from them to all Chriſtians throughout* Europe, *who is alſo quickly to be ſent to all People throughout the World, with orders that they preſent themſelves, that they deſiſt from waging War, and give place to Chriſt, the Prince of Peace, who is now about to ſpeak Peace to all Nations.*

This, it ſeems, was his Trumpet to a *Millennium*: the beginning of which he fixt to the year 1672. But, by his great good Fortune, being then 80 years of Age, he Dyed in the year 1671: and ſo never lived to be reproach'd in Perſon for the failure of his Scheme. But *Mareſius* (*a*) (from whom all theſe particulars are now taken, and who effectually expos'd

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the Madneſs, not only of this *Prophet*, but of *(b) Serrarius*, and all other Enthuſiaſts of that ſort) ſurviv'd ſome few Months the Period of his Antagoniſt: as if preſerv'd on purpoſe to ſee God, and Nature, declaring in his favour.

VIII.

Hitherto we have been conſidering thoſe Deluding and Deluded Prophets, who have already been ſufficiently refuted by Time it ſelf, and the preſent State of things: By the Sun and Moon, and by all the faithful Witneſſes in Heaven. But Two others remain yet to be remembred, whoſe Periods are not yet paſt, but are indeed juſt at hand: and which therefore, if not ſtrenuouſly oppos'd from Reaſon and Scripture, may prove the growing occaſion of Fanaticiſm, Inſurrections, and other Miſchiefs, in our own, and our Childrens time. I mean, *Cuſanus* and *Jurieu*.

Cuſanus, otherwiſe called *Cardinal Nicolas de Cuſa*, has been always reputed, not only for his great Dignity in the Church, but for his Knowledge in the Laws, in Divinity, in the Mathematics, and the ſtudy of Chronology, one of the greateſt Perſons of the Fifteenth Century. Yet with reference to the Character of this Man, as well as that of *Scioppius* and *Jurieu*, I obſerv'd with too much reaſon, in the foregoing Diſcourſe, that the incomparable Diſcoveries of *Chronology*, have ſometimes dwindled into *Prophecy*. For *Cuſanus*, who had acquir'd to himſelf

(*b*) A fanatick Author, who Prophecied great things from the Conjunction of the Planets, in *December*, 1662. all relating to Chriſt's ſecond Coming, and the near eſtabliſhment of a *Millennium*.

a ſingular reputation in Chronology, by a Piece of his, that was read in the Council of *Bazil*, about the year 1436, under the Title of *Reparatio Kalendarii*, being a *Correction of the Julian Kalendar for all Time to come*, did afterwards fruſtrate the whole deſign and pains of that Work, by another which he wrote in the year 1452 : wherein he advances an Opinion, that *all Time then to come*, ſhould amount to little more than about Two Centuries and an half. This the Reader will find at the end of his Second Volume, under the Title of *Conjectura de Noviſſimis diebus*, i. e. *a Conjecture concerning the laſt Days.* In that Treatiſe, he diſpatches the meaſure of time to come after this conciſe manner. *Tunc veniet* (ſays he) *judicaturus*, &c. *i. e. Then ſhall Chriſt come to Judge the Quick and Dead*——*And this ſhall come to paſs after the Year of our Lord's Nativity* 1700, *but before the Year* 1734 *of the ſame.* The Method, by which he Collects ſo great an Account ſo very punctually, is this. He computes 50 Years to one Jubilee, and 34 Jubilees from the time of Chriſt's Reſurrection, to that of His Second Coming. For, ſays he, *uti poſt primum* Adam, &c. *i. e. As according to the Learned* Philo, *the Deſtruction of Sin arriv'd in the 34th Jubilee after the firſt* Adam, *by the waters of the Flood, in the days of* Noah ; *ſo we conjecture that, in the 34th Jubilee after the Second* Adam, *ſhall arrive the Deſtruction of Sin by the fire of the Holy Ghoſt.*

As for Monſieur *Jurieu*, he is an Old *French* Prophet, ſtill Living, if I miſtake not, and juſtly own'd on all hands, to have ſhewn himſelf, in many other performances, a Man of great Parts, Piety, and Learning. But one would wonder what could give him ſuch a warmth of Brain, when in the year 1686, he wrote the Fifth Chapter of his Second Part of *Ac-*

compliſh-

compliſhment of Prophecies. For without any manner of reſerve, or diſtruſt of his account, he there gives us the Chronology of the Century then to come, with the ſame Air as if he were Writing the Tranſactions of one already paſt. *Antichriſtianiſm* (ſays he, meaning *Popery* by that word) *was Born about the Year* 450, Leo *the Firſt then ſitting in the Chair. It ſhall Dye about the Year* 1710. *This may happen ſooner.*—— *But I do not ſee that it can go much farther, unleſs it be to* 1714. Again in the ſame Chapter: —— *This will fall in the Year* 1710, *or thereabouts: Wherein Images ſhall be intirely Aboliſh'd, with Popery* ——— But the remainder of the World's Age, he calculates after this manner. *I ſuppoſe* 30 *Years ſhall paſs for the reuniting all Chriſtians. And this Union ſhall be effected, about the Year* 1740.——— *When the Union ſhall be effected, no leſs than* 45 *Years will be requiſite to run over all the Earth, and Convert the Nations that are Strangers to the Covenant. Add* 45 *to* 1740, *that will fall on the Year* 1785: *in which ſhall come the Glorious Reign of Chriſt on the Earth.* ———

This is indeed a very hard ſtroke; and ſuch as I will reflect upon no otherwiſe than by Silence only. For though Monſieur *Jurieu* dare poſitively affirm this, yet I dare not poſitively deny it. I ſhall only deſire him to obſerve, that whenever Chriſt ſhall indeed *come, every idle word that Men have ſpoke, they ſhall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment. For by thy words thou ſhalt be Juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be Condemned,* Mat. 12. 27. If therefore he has groundleſly amus'd the Church, by theſe or the like confident Interpretations, I know not how he can atone for it, but by Repentance before he Dyes. But *Cuſanus*, who has been already Dead almoſt 250 Years, has indeed left ſome ſort of Atone-

ment,

ment, if he proves to be in a miſtake. 'Tis his concluſion of the Treatiſe I have above Cenſur'd, and which, in Juſtice to him, and this whole Cauſe, I ſhall add as the concluſion of this Section. For it contains, I think, a very true Obſervation; and, as Experience has ſince teſtified, even a true *Prophecy* at the ſame time. *Many Perſons have wearied themſelves in theſe Prophetic matters, whom different Views have always led into different Opinions, every one abounding in his own ſenſe, and not one conſpiring with another. Several Seaſons are now gone, which even ſome Learned Men have imagined, were never to arrive. And thus Thouſands have ſpent their Days, and Thouſands ſhall ſtill ſpend them, commenting, without end, on the Prophecy of* Daniel. See the Works of *Nic. de Cuſa*, in fol. *Bazil.* 1563.

IX.

But I am at length come to the conſideration of that *Farce*, which to the reproach of right Reaſon, not to ſay of the Chriſtian Religion, is now acting in the World. 'Tis that of a New Fraternity of Prophets, firſt Aſſociated in the *Cevennees* of *France*, about the beginning of this Century. And in truth, while they continued on that Scene, every one was at liberty, out of regard to their Diſtreſſes and Perſecutions, either to cenſure, or pity them, as he thought fit. But nothing, beſides their own Shame and Puniſhment, can ever atone for thoſe Impoſtures, which, ſince the arrival of *Elias Marion*, they have been venting in the happy Calm, and Serenity of this Kingdom. In their Book, called *The Cry from the Deſart*, we are told that this happen'd in *September*, 1706: And in the ſame Piece it is, that we are favour'd with a Liſt of his Aſſociates:

ciates : all of them his own Country-Men, except Mr. *Facio* of *Geneva*, the only Perſon of this Fraternity, that has no Ignorance, nor Perſecutions, to plead in his excuſe. As for *Marion*, 'tis certainly true of him, and perhaps of moſt of his Accomplices, that he is not to be eſteem'd a Refugee, eſcap'd hither for the ſake of Conſcience and Religion. For according to his own account, The *Pharaoh* of the Age (ſo he Entitles the *French* King) conducted him ſafe, by Capitulation, to *Geneva*. And when, being ſo determin'd by Inſpiration, he thought fit to break thoſe Articles, and return again into the *Cevennees*; the ſame Power, to be rid of him at any rate, was glad to ſend him away under a ſecond Convoy to the ſame place. The reaſons of their having ſince ſingled out this Kingdom for the chief Theatre of their Deluſions, they themſelves ſeem to put upon the Liberty and Humanity of our Conſtitution : Leavings, which are indeed valuable in themſelves, but too apt to be abus'd to theſe horrid Purpoſes. Whatever it be, they had no ſooner profeſt their Gifts in this Region of Spleen, but they began to ſtagger ſome unſtable Minds : nay, even to engage ſome of no ordinary Note and Underſtanding in their Party. Amongſt theſe, a Gentleman who at firſt wrote himſelf *John Lacy* Eſquire, but now *John* Surnamed *Lacy*, undertook to anſwer for their Integrity, and to eſpouſe their Inſpirations for Divine. In his words therefore, I ſhall here give the ſum of their Pretences, as far as I am concern'd to parallel them with the Prophecies I have before obſerv'd.

Their Meſſage (ſays (*a*) he) *is, that the Grand Ju-*

(*a*) See Mr. *Lacy*'s Preface to *The Cry in the Deſart*. pag. 21.

bilee,

bilee, the acceptable Year of the Lord, the accompliſhment of thoſe numerous Scriptures touching the new Heavens and the new Earth, the Kingdom of the Meſſiah, the Marriage of the Lamb, the Firſt Reſurrection, or the new Jeruſalem now deſcending from above, is now even at the Door, and to be manifeſt over the whole Earth within the ſhort Term of Three Years. He adds, that *this Miſſion ſhall be witneſſed by a Deluge of Judgments on the Wicked, as Famine, Peſtilence, Fire from Heaven, Darkneſs,* &c. That *the exterminating Angels ſhall root out the Tares, and there ſhall remain on the Earth only good Corn*; *and* that *the Clergy of all Men might, by their Studies, be moſt capable of diſcerning this, if at the ſame time their Intereſt did not lye in the contrary Ballance, ſince whenever the time comes that Infants, Women, Young Men and Old do Prophecy, there will manifeſtly be little need of them.*

'Tis moſt probable, that the ſhort term of Time aſſign'd in this important Meſſage, is taken from *Jurieu.* But the ſtrains in which it is deliver'd, are very conſonant to the other Enthuſiaſtic Pretences of this Appendix: particularly that worſt ſort, of Numb. V. and VI. relating to *De Rupe-ſciſſa*, and the Fanatics of *Munſter.* It conſiſts either of ſuch matters which are indeed the Scriptural Characters of Chriſt's Future Kingdom, but of the near approach of which no real Token has been yet obſerv'd, *viz.* The ſeparation betwixt the Righteous and the Wicked; the deſcent of the new *Jeruſalem*; the firſt Reſurrection, and the like: or elſe of one peculiar Circumſtance, which in truth is in ſome meaſure come to paſs, but is falſely reckoned up among the Marks of Chriſt's Kingdom, *viz.* the Abaſement and Rejection of the Clergy. This is indeed the great and *new aſſerted Right of the Chriſtian Church*,

according to the Inventions of a late renowned Book, Publiſhed, we ſee, very ſeaſonably for the introduction of ſome ſuch incongruous inconvenient *Farce*. For as we are there taught, that there is indeed no difference betwixt the Clark and Miniſter of the Congregation; ſo we here find all equally commiſſion'd in this new Aſſembly. As 'tis there at large aſſerted, that the Laity too have their Authority to diſtribute the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; ſo we are here inform'd with what Solemnity Brother *Cavalier* put this in practice in the *Cevennees*. But this being the firſt Chriſtian Church that has been Eſtabliſh'd upon the Principles of that Book, and it having been carried on by ſo extravagant a Conduct, as well as now hiſſed off the Stage with ſo general a ſcorn, 'tis to be preſumed, that the Book it ſelf will prove one of thoſe crude Deſigns, which, though too many applaud in Speculation, yet none will endure in Practice.

The late execution of the Law upon the Three Principal of this Prophane Fraternity, together with that Cenſure they have underwent from the Churches of their own Nation, makes all Arguments unneceſſary, and perhaps all farther Reflexions unmerciful in their condition. It may ſuffice therefore to obſerve, that in conſequence of a Sentence pronounced againſt them at *Guild-Hall*, on *November* the 22d, 1707, They have been ſince expos'd on a Scaffold in different places of this City; and that a Paper denoting their *Crimes*, *was* affix'd to their Heads as follows.

Elias Marion, *Convicted for Falſely and Prophanely pretending himſelf to be a True Prophet, and Printing, and Uttering many things, as dictated and revealed to him by the Spirit of God, to terrifie the* Queen's *People.*

John D' Audé *and* Nicholas Facio, *Convicted for Abetting and Favouring* Elias Marion, *in his Wicked and*

and Counterfeit Prophecies, and cauſing them to be Printed and Publiſhed, to terrifie the Queen's *People.*

But I muſt ſtill crave the Liberty of adding one peculiar Obſervation, concerning thoſe *Prophetick Warnings* that have been Publiſh'd in Mr. *Lacy*'s Name: *viz.* That whoever ſhall take that Piece in hand, together with the *Alcoran* of *Mahomet*, will immediately diſcover the ſtrange remarkable reſemblance which they bear to one another. That Gentleman is pleas'd to tell us, that he is at preſent in the Forty fourth Year of his Age: the very ſame in which *Mahomet* firſt began to vent his Impoſtures to the World. He uſhers in his warnings with theſe words; (*a*) *Chooſe: Own or Deny:* And with the ſame charge *Mahomet* enforc'd his *Alcoran*; (*a*) *Believe, or Believe it not.* They both continue their Narrations in the Perſon of God, ſtill addreſſing to themſelves: they both abound with frequent importunate Juſtifications of their pretences: they both introduce God (*b*) informing them of the Scoffs and Objections that are made againſt them in the World: And laſtly, they both make the (*c*) ſame Challenge to all of equal Capacity and Education; *viz. Ma-*

(*a*) See Mr. *Lacy*'s *Prophetical Warnings*, pag. 7. and the *Alcoran*, chap. 17. towards the end.

(*b*) See the *Prophetical Warnings*, pag. 18. 101. and the *Alcoran*, chap. 15. 25. 37. and elſewhere.

(*c*) They ſay, *Mahomet* hath invented this Book. Say unto them, come and bring any that reſembleth it in Doctrine and Eloquence, *&c. Alcoran* chap. 10. *about the middle.* Whether the *Latin* of the Inſpirations here following, could be furniſhed by me from ſuch Initiation or Progreſs therein, as I have before given an account of; or whether of the many Thouſands in *London*, in like circumſtance, there are any that can perform it, I leave others to paſs their Sentiments upon. See Mr. *Lacy*'s Preface to his *Prophetical Warnings*, pag. 10.

homet to write the like *Arabic*, and Mr. *Lacy* to deliver the like *Latin* to that he uſes, without the Benefit of Inſpiration. Yet as to this latter particular, there muſt be own'd to be a great difference in the ground of the two Challenges. For the *Arabic* of *Mahomet* is, and ever was, the ſtandard of Eloquence to that Language. But the *Latin* of Mr. *Lacy*, is in truth nothing but the Idioms of other Languages, dreſt up in *Latin* words, or words of *Latin* Terminations. Nay, the Idioms, he uſes, are not thoſe of his own Mother Tongue: as one would indeed reaſonably expect, if he were really the firſt Inſtrument of his Revelations: but they are thoſe peculiar Blunders, which the (*d*) *French* and *Italians*, ſo frequently adopt into their *Latin* Diſcourſes; and which therefore are moſt probably faſten'd upon this Gentleman, by ſome *Sergius* that attends him. I would not indeed lightly accuſe him, or any Perſon, of Copying after ſo deteſtable an Original: But if he has not indeed done ſo, he will be ſurpriſed to ſee how exactly he has happen'd to jump upon the ſame form and manner of Revelation. At leaſt it behoves him to conſider, (if, by any late diſtemper of Mind or Body, he has not been led into a perſuaſion of his own Sincerity) that thoſe *Warnings* of his are nothing but one continued, Flaming, Monumental Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. I do not mean, the Sin peculiarly ſo called: becauſe there is ſtill room to hope, that he may be capable of an exemplary Repentance: but I mean one of thoſe greateſt Affronts that can poſſibly be offer'd to that Eternal Spirit, while He charges ſo many wild Forgeries on Him who is our *Guider into all Truth.*

(*d*) For inſtance, *Demandem & reſpondete*, for *interrogabo & reſpondete*. pag. 60. And again, *deliberate, penſate*; for *deliberate, cogitate*, pag. 91.

X.

But I conclude with one general Reflection, applicable not to this only, but to every miſtaken Prophecy of this ſort: *viz.* That there is one peculiar Evil, and one peculiar Good, to be Collected from them all.

The Evil to be fear'd, is this: Leaſt when Men have fix'd too peremptorily any Scriptural mark of time, and betrayed themſelves into a perſuaſion, that thoſe, which are indeed the darkeſt, are the cleareſt Paſſages of Holy Writ; aſſoon as the Event ſhall diſappoint their Gueſſes, and Nature, together with Religion, ſhall proceed in its wonted courſe; they may at length be tempted to make a Blaſphemous Miſtake: and rather than ſuſpect their own Idoliz'd Hypotheſis, impute the failure to thoſe Divine Oracles, on which it was falſely grounded.

See there one very ſurpriſing Evil of theſe Attempts! But it is to be ballanced on the other ſide, by a ſuperior Good, ſuch, as not only Conquers, but triumphs over ſo great an Evil. I mean, the Glory that redounds to God and to Religion, even from theſe lying Vanities of ſinful Man. For though ſo many Pretenders to this Secret, have all along miſtaken the obſcure and uncertain Prophecies; we have Prophecies, as clear and certain as the Light, that they ſhould be ſo miſtaken. We are in general aſſured, that Variety of *Falſe Prophets ſhall ariſe, ſuch as ſhall ſhew Signs and Wonders, and deceive (if poſſible) the very Elect.* Nay, we are told more particularly, that there ſhall ariſe Meſſengers of this very Falſhood; Men who ſhall ſay, *See here; ſee there; The time draweth near.* &c. Accordingly, theſe things have

have literally come to paſs, in almoſt every Century of Chriſtianity: and that too, under two very diſcouraging Circumſtances, the Sinfulneſs of the Enquiry, and the Impoſſibility of ſucceeding in it. One would indeed have wonder'd, after the firſt Authors of our Religion had been reprehended by thoſe laſt words of our departing Lord; (*Acts* 1. 7.) and acquainted very poſitively, *that it was not for them to know the Times and Seaſons*; that any amuſement about Times and Seaſons, ſhould ever perplex their Succeſſors in the Church. Add, that this was ſtill leſs to be expected, when the ſearch was carefully repreſented to be as impracticable, as it was improper for us; and when to diſcourage any inquiſitive temper of Mankind, it was ſaid to be above the Knowledge, even of the Angels that are in Heaven. Yet to ſhew that nothing which has been evidently revealed, can ever fail of being as eminently fulfill'd; ſuch Perſons always have been found that are ambitious to employ themſelves, even in that unwarrantable and ſucceſsleſs Task. By this means, while they falſifie the difficult and hidden Scriptures, they themſelves are the completion of the clear ones. *The truth of God*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *hath more abounded through their Lies to his Glory:* And though their Predictions never yet contributed to atteſt the Divinity of the Goſpel; yet their vicious incorrigible Curioſity does daily do it.

What hinders then, but that inſtead of being *ſoon ſhaken, or troubled in Mind*, (as, upon this very Surpriſe, above Sixteen Hundred Years ago, ſome *Theſſalonians* were) we improve all ſuch perverſe Accidents into matter of Religious *Joy, and Peace in Believing?* We ſee with what Truth our Saviour has foretold the Coming of ſuch Men: and we may there-

herefore reſt ſecurely upon the Advice he has added o it, (*a*) *Beware of them; believe them not; go ye ot out* upon their groundleſs calls. He ſaw how nany preſumptuous Uncommiſſion'd Guides, would venture to entrench upon Eternal Secrets, and diſturb the Religion of Mankind. He has not therefore eſt his Church unarm'd, and unprovided, againſt ſo dangerous a Snare. On the contrary, by three wiſe and careful Admonitions, He has directed our Thoughts and our Behaviour, in relation to this important Article. The firſt is that check upon our Curioſity; and that warning againſt all faulty Enquiries after that which is undiſcoverable, and paſt finding out: (*b*) *Of that Day and Hour knoweth no Man.* The Second is, the Uſe which He makes of this awful Secret, and the charge which He thereupon leaves upon the Conſcience of Mankind: (*c*) *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the Day nor the Hour in which the Son of Man cometh.* The Third is the Univerſality of this Advice, and his own poſitive Declaration that He then directed it, not only to his firſt Diſciples, but to every Perſon of every Nation, throughout all Ages of the Goſpel: (*d*) *What I ſay unto you, I ſay unto A L L, Watch.*

W E therefore, even *W E*, of this ſinful time and place, have the Happineſs of our Saviours own Perſonal Exhortations, and his Inſtructions, how to acquit our ſelves in this, or in any Juncture more difficult than this. For were the Alarm now given, not by any Prophane Impoſtor, but by Men of unſuſpected Piety and Learning, aſſuring *us* that *the Great Day of the Lord was come*; We are always to queſtion their

(*a*) See *Mark* 13. 21, 22, 23. *Luke* 17. 23. and 21. 8. (*b*) *Mat.* 24. 36. (*c*) *Mat.* 25. 13. (*d*) *Mark* 13. 37.

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Authority, till *the Powers of Heaven begin to ſhake*, and the Darkneſs of the *Sun and Moon* bear witneſs to the Meſſage. Yet thrice happy they; who can, from their heart, wiſh it were ſo indeed, and ſay, with a calm aſſurance, *they were looking for their Maſter's Coming!* For ſuch a looking will equally fit them for their own End, if they are not indeed ordained to ſee the end of the World. Their own particular Arreſt, and their conſignment into God's hand, muſt certainly happen at their Death: And then it matters not, when the General Aſſize is toenſue: whether at the end of two Hundred, or ſix Hundred, or even a thouſand Generations from our firſt Parent. Now that is a tract of time, more than once mentioned in (*a*) Holy Scripture, which, according to the known Computation of the Antients, will amount to 30000 Years. And though indeed it is no where us'd on purpoſe to mark the Age of the World; yet there is not, I believe, any ſo direct Teſtimony, that the World ſhall be of any ſhorter continuance, as this indirectly inſinuates, that it may laſt ſo long.

(*a*) *Deut.* 7. 9. and the 2d Commandment, *Exod.* 20. 6. and *Deut.* 5. 10. to which add *Exod.* 34. 7. *Jer.* 32. 18. noting the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe and *Syriac* Verſion, and *Pſal.* 103. 17.

FINIS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Writer of a Charge of Hereſy againſt Mr. Dodwel's Late Epiſtolary Diſcourſe, *being deſirous to conclude his ſhare in that Controverſie at once, ſuſpended for ſome time the Printing of his Second Part, upon Information that Mr.* Dodwel *himſelf, as well as another Perſon, was ſtill farther ingaging in defence of his Opinions. But the Title of ſuch a Piece being now made Publick, his Second Part will be ſoon Completed, and Publiſhed, as at firſt deſign'd.*